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ABSTRACT

Student personnel departments need to examine their role critically in terms of reforming higher education for "new" minority group students. These students' problems are threefold: those related to the college; those personal in origin; and those with social or psychological cause. Five specific deficiencies of student services are: (1) failure to admit more black and Puerto Rican students; (2) the image of the counseling process as a failure by "new" students; (3) many schools' failure to provide needed medical services to the "new" student; (4) neglect of "new" students' financial assistance; and (5) inadequacy of orientation programs. The following are suggestions for student services improvement: (1) organize separate student personnel services to focus entirely on meeting the needs of disadvantaged students; (2) change the role of the counselor, stressing the responsibility of serving as facilitator or enabler; and (3) actively involve the community in minority student and college affairs. (CA)

STUDENT SERVICES AND THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA

by
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Black Studies Programs, Afro-American Institutes, Puerto Rican Studies, and Latin American Programs are springing up all over the country in higher educational institutions--on all levels. Demands for these programs are increasing, as are similar demands from other segments of the community. Why? Our society is in a predicament. All of its institutions are affected. Higher education as one of the major institutions is sharply confronted by problems of social upheaval. Today's occurrences stem not from any single element of society, but have intertwining roots from each facet thereof. The problem facing higher education today must be solved with an understanding of this, their true nature--with an understanding of the internal and external forces at play. Community junior colleges are an integral part of and must share the responsibility that is higher education. They too must seek this vital understanding and contribute toward unraveling and solving the problems of the world-wide crises.

The student personnel departments of community junior colleges comprise one area of higher education which needs critical examination of their roles in terms of reforming higher education. Our attention will be focused on this problem this afternoon. Specifically, I have been asked to relate the topic "Student Services and the Human Development Dilemma" to services for "new

students" in community junior colleges with regard to: 1) some of the current failures to meet their needs; 2) some of their problems; and 3) some of the emerging student personnel models designed to overcome these deficiencies.

The term "new student" here is used to cover those students from minority groups whose cultures or values are "different from that of the prevailing middle class culture that seems to exemplify most of our college campuses," as explained in Dr. Jane Matson's letter of invitation to me.

First of all, it should be made very clear that when we describe minority groups as the "new students," we must understand that there is diversity in this "new" population too, and that generalizations about any group tend toward thinking in terms of stereotypes. The terms "disadvantaged student" or "high risk student" are widely used to denote educational and economic disadvantage. The term "new student" bears the connotation of an ethnic group such as black or Puerto Rican students so disadvantaged. In the latter case the students may or may not be educationally or economically disadvantaged. The odds are, however, that many of the new students will be disadvantaged, different in appearance and will have varied needs as have all students.

There are several overall assumptions which should be mentioned as basic to this discussion. One is the assumption that the goal is to work toward an integrated society, with this integration reflected in the colleges through a good mixture of students from a variety of cultures, races, economic and social levels. This then to me means that we are against tokenism for any one group and that we desire as wide a representation of various groups as possible in both the student body and faculty.

Another overall assumption is that the "new student" has needs similar to those of other students. He may be proud to be a part of the college and

he may be proud that he has been accepted as a special student. However, he will not wish to have any special label or be identified in any special way that isolates him or labels him as different from the other students.

A third assumption is that when a college has only one or two individuals from minority groups or 2 or 3 per cent in its total student population and faculty, the college itself is at a disadvantage and so are its students and faculty. Unless this proportion changes to provide educational and professional opportunities for all, the colleges will remain isolated from society. As a matter of fact, this isolationism provides and nourishes psychological problems for all concerned. We are fast becoming one world and college should provide major understanding, guidance and a working example of living with and working with people who are different. In my opinion, college faculty and students who avoid this interaction have serious psychological problems and they are not facing the realities of the world. Therefore, the white faculty and students are more disadvantaged than the black or Puerto Rican.

The fourth assumption is the recognition that all colleges are different and their implementation of goals or changes will have to take shape in terms of many variables, such as their location, whether public or private, whether residential or commuting and so on. Therefore, this discussion will more or less require speaking in generalities, but let me stress, generalities known to be specifically applicable in many situations.

Before discussing failures of student personnel functions as they are now organized, I am compelled to mention as a major failure the overall inadequacy of the administration of colleges to be "tuned in" to the needs of these students. If administrators have been aware of and even listened, they have not acted, or have not communicated, or have not furnished the leadership which

the current educational revolution required. One of the most serious failures on the part of administrators is the failure to plan ahead, in plenty of time, for the new students. In many situations the planning for a special program, if it is done in advance, occurs within a couple of weeks prior to the arrival of the student. The college environment is, therefore, quite unready to present an emotional climate of acceptance. The planning should require at a minimum faculty and student involvement to assure that the new students are coming to an institution where new and different individuals feel that they belong and are secure. College administrators must take the lead in setting the tone for a climate of acceptance for the new and different student. Perhaps, if the administration at Wesleyan, as an example, and as described in the New York Times magazine of January 18, 1970, had anticipated some of the problems, the outrageous developments of two nations on one campus would never have come into being so that there is now complete separation of the black and white students on the campus. This condition, of course, is sheer retrogression. Another example of what can develop when students are admitted in haste without planning is the case of Wisconsin State University-Oshkosh, as described in the November 1969 issue of The Crises Magazine in an article by Paul P. Abraham entitled "Black Thursday at Oshkosh."

Because of the developing racial crisis or black revolution, another failure stemming from administrators, is the inadequate staffing, training of faculty and employees. By inadequate staffing I am referring to the employment of individuals whose personalities are unfit to deal with other human beings in a teaching relationship, in a one-to-one relationship, who are bigots or snobs, who have no interest in human beings and who are totally inflexible. Furthermore,

nothing is done to try to change these individuals through in-service training, through supervision or through sincere evaluation of their performances in different areas. The new students must face all the employees of the college-- administrators, heads of departments, counselors, teachers, clerical staff, custodians, waitresses, elevator operators, etc. What sort of training and supervision is given all of these, and what is done about their undesirable attitudes? To what extent do members of the student personnel department effect change in undesirable practices or habits of these individuals? While we are on the subject of staffing, mention must be made of the current demand for more black administrators, faculty and counselors. Some colleges have apparently met the demands by hiring the first black face that appears, without carefully examining credentials, experiences and qualification. You may be aware of the tragic experience of New York University in such a situation, to cite an example.

Closely related to these administrative failures is that of funding special programs. Money appropriated for special students and their needs may often be used for other purposes. Other problems stem from using the special program for the admission of new students for political purposes or to gain power rather than a sincere effort and dedication to meeting the needs of the new students. It would, therefore, appear that as long as these administrative problems exist, student personnel departments will also have problems.

However, since the first portion of our topic deals with the current failure of student personnel services to meet the needs of new students, it seems appropriate first of all to define services. After a survey of 723 institutions, 213 of which were community or junior colleges, a definition has been provided in a publication of the United States Office of Education

("Student Services Administration in Higher Education" by A. R. Ayers, P. A. Tripp, J. H. Russell, published in 1966, OE53026, #16, page 3). "Student services in higher education usually include:

1. Welfare functions such as counseling, testing, health services, financial aids programs, placement and alumni relations;
2. control functions such as admissions, records, discipline and living arrangements;
3. activities functions such as cocurricular and extra-curricular programs, student government, student publications, student unions and cultural programs; and
4. teaching functions such as orientation programs, foreign student programs, remedial clinics and other informal educational services in residence halls and elsewhere in the community."

To what extent have these functions failed to meet the needs of new students? I shall now discuss five specific failures regarding some of the student services in the definition.

1. The failure to admit more black and Puerto Rican students. Often this is true due to inflexible admissions officers, standards and requirements and no desire for these students. Further, black and Puerto Rican students often do not do well on tests or interviews. Even with open enrollment, some students do not follow through because of being "pushed around" or in the attempt to enroll receive insufficient answers to questions and there is no one available to take the necessary time with them. How many admissions offices have an "open door" policy but such policy is a farce if applicants do not receive sufficient information and assistance.

2. The counseling process is often seen as a failure to the "new student." The most serious problem is probably the black and Puerto Rican feeling that the counselor doesn't understand him. Especially is this stated about white counselors. Very often the problem is that the counselor treats the student

in a condescending manner. In some cases, the white counselor in striving to effect rapport with the student, will begin by discussing, for example, black writers, or books or individuals with whom she is acquainted. The students have expressed the opinion that these counselors are "phonies." Perhaps the students sense that some counselors are basically afraid of them.

Counselors themselves encounter problems which prevent them from doing a better job. Some have large student loads and many assigned tasks in addition to counseling, which makes it impossible to be available for students. Yet, counselors also need to be free to participate in faculty activities, serve on committees and be involved in the business of the college; otherwise, they come to feel isolated second class citizens. They should have faculty rank and enjoy all the privileges and status of other faculty. Short of this, groundwork is laid for unhappy counselors who may then take it out on the students.

3. One of the most significant services for "new students" is medical attention and many institutions have failed miserably in this respect. For the "new student," one of his major problems may be his health. What health services are available on your campus? How do you assure that each new student has no health deficiency? Does the student need glasses and is his hearing normal? What is done about such problems as overweight and underweight, exhaustion or fatigue? Perhaps the institutions with residential facilities better meet health needs than the commuting ones where students return to their homes daily.

4. Most of the new students probably need financial assistance and I suspect that this is another area wherein we have failed. Actually, many of the "new students" withdraw because of financial problems. Although institutions have the federal student aid funds and offer financial aid packages, institutions

differ in the annual amounts available. Heavily endowed private colleges may have more resources in this respect. A number of the commuting students will need funds for food, clothing, medical attention or rent. Funds for small cash loans or grants for emergency purposes should be readily available to assist. Many needy students must have summers free for work in order to build up financial resources. For this reason, any orientation program or summer remedial program may be out of the question for some students, unless the institution can finance the total needs of the student. It goes without question that these students should be provided with summer job opportunities--and perhaps a little planning might relate job experience to academic work.

Financial aid officers must be keenly aware of the need to assist students with budget making and planning how to spend wisely. If weekly stipends are allotted, for example, the problem may be to help a student whose stipend regularly runs out in two days to discover that he cannot spend \$2.00 every morning in a cafeteria for a breakfast of pancakes on a stipend of \$5.00 per week.

In the matter of cash grants or stipends, the students should not be embarrassed by unnecessary questioning or snide remarks by clerical staff or others who may issue the checks. It is tragic, furthermore, to change allotment amounts for students once a promise has been made.

5. Orientation programs are another type of service which needs improvement. Are the programs relevant to the needs of the student at that particular time? Is too much attempted in a short time? How much of what is done is considered a "lark" for the students? To what extent are students involved in planning these programs?

In the course of mentioning some of the failures of current practices in student services, I have hinted at some of the problems which students from

minority groups face. To focus on the student problems, three aspects will now be discussed: those which relate to the college; those which are personal in origin; and those which are social or psychological in origin.

The "new students" face a college environment which is alien to them. In the first place, there are few if any black and Puerto Rican administrators, faculty and counselors present on most of the campuses; and similarly, only a small number of minority students in the college population. This very lack of presence of others from their groups immediately presents a certain type of pressure for the minority student. He may feel that he must represent his group and that whatever he does or says will be used to describe his people. He may even be used as an expert on racial matters, when he knows very little except from his personal experiences. He may feel that he is an object of curiosity and is being used to satisfy the egos of so-called liberals. If he is ignored, he may feel that he is not accepted. On the other hand, well intentioned individuals, who appear friendly, may unknowingly or unintentionally use terminology and statements which are considered racial slurs by the student who will then conclude that the individual is prejudiced.

The feeling of isolation is common. In some instances the isolation occurs because the college physically separates the students in special programs by locating facilities for them away from the main campus. In addition, the students may feel excluded from social events and student activities. If the college is located in a small town, often the student will not be accepted in places of business or in the local community, which may increase the feeling of isolation.

The college is the seat of many problems which these students face. One of the overall concerns is how the student adjusts in communicating with others.

Since he appears so different from the middle class students, through his language and speech patterns, his values and his habits, he may be frequently confronted with criticism or ridicule. Some students when recognizing these difficulties or differences and the treatment received, will remain aloof by seldom commenting on anything or by isolating themselves. Others may become aggressive and angry and fight back in various ways. While still others may give up and drop out of college.

With regard to family situations, many of the new students come from backgrounds in which they are the only ones in the family to attend college. As a result, there is no understanding on the part of the family as to the needs of a college student and no encouragement will be given. Many of the parents object to the student's aspiration for college. Some even require the student to move away from the home, or will contribute no funds, or will refuse to understand the need for quiet, or a place and time for study. Other demands may require the student to arrive home at a certain time for certain responsibilities, such as care of siblings or ill members of the family. Moreover, there may be patterns of family squabbling, alcoholism, drugs and prostitution. In addition, the students may be pressured by their peers in the community to continue certain social activities for which the college student no longer has time. These pressures add up to the student questioning himself as to whether college is worthwhile.

The financial problems which a student may face can be tremendous. Probably most of the "new students" can be classified as coming from poverty or near poverty income levels. Their families may be large, food is scarce, living may be crowded and meeting the day to day minimum needs of existence is a problem. Often middle income groups find this difficult to understand or believe, even

when it is explained. Some students may be attending college with insufficient clothing and exist on one meal per day, and some days with no food. Likewise, the health needs in some cases may be appalling. Because of poverty situations many students are, therefore, forced to work while attending college which means little time is left for study and they remain in a state of exhaustion from work, college, home confusion and responsibilities. Moreover, the student may decline to seek financial assistance, especially loans.

Another serious personal problem which is interrelated with the others is the fact that the academic background of the students is probably weak. Therefore, as a college student the individual has not only to meet academic requirements but must overcome the inadequate background for some college courses.

The psychological and social problems that the new student faces are intertwined with the college and personal problems. In one instance, the student is aware of his family background of which he may be ashamed and in another respect, he is aware that his academic background and social experience is not equal to that of his fellow students. As a result, he experiences a feeling of being out of place and wonders if he can measure up to the level of other students and the expectations of counselors and faculty. In this connection, if faculty and counselors have managed to convey a confidence in his ability, it may be difficult for him to overcome the earlier impact of a high school "indoctrination" in which he was steered into other than an academic path. The additional factors of being lonely with no friends, being excluded from social events and not accepted as a part of the "in group" are emotional situations with which he must deal. Moreover, finding that his values are completely different, not accepted and misunderstood, may prevent him from any attempt to enjoy being a member of the college community. As a result, the student

remains in a state of anxiety and mistrust of people. He finds it uncomfortable or impossible to disclose his thoughts or problems because he is in foreign territory surrounded by strangers. His major inclination upon admission was to become a good student, to become involved in all areas of student life, to be accepted into an environment which offers every opportunity to assist him achieve his goals. When he faces reality, he recognizes that these dreams cannot be fulfilled.

May I conclude this section on some of the problems which students face by reading excerpts from Margaret Anderson's Children of the South as reported by Frederick D. Harper in an article entitled "Black Student Revolt on White Campus" in the Journal of College Student Personnel, September 1969, pages 293-294.

"Being black means to walk across campus on my first day of class and not see one black student.

Being black means to have all white teachers and to be surrounded in class by all white or nearly all white students.

Being black means to go to a white counselor whom I don't trust, and who doesn't know how to handle my presence or my problems.

Being black is trying to get administrators to understand my needs and do something about them, or trying to convince a campus policeman that he should not arrest me out of prejudice.

Being black is to watch whites look upon my natural hair, my mustache, my African garments, my black music and literature, my community language, and my other symbols of black pride as being deviant.

Being black is to go into a class disadvantaged and find that I have a teacher who believes it is impossible for a black student to make an "A" or "B" grade.

Being black is not having a penny in my pocket and seeing white students visit Europe and Mexico and driving fancy sport cars, and at the same time knowing that their parents and ancestors got rich off the sweat and pain of my parents and ancestors.

Finally, being black means to be lonely, hyperalienated, depressed, displayed, ignored, and harassed. Just the fact of being black is to be at the brink of revolt."

Perhaps I have painted a dismal picture of current problems regarding student personnel practices for new or disadvantaged students. It is possible to change this past history and increasingly efforts are being made in this direction. Some of the emerging patterns or changes will now be discussed.

One of the new developments is that of organizing separate student personnel departments to focus entirely on meeting the needs of disadvantaged students. These departments occur where the college has decided to admit more than a token number of special students. An example of this is the College Discovery Program operating since 1964 in the community colleges of the City University of New York. The counselors are selected from individuals who have had experience in disadvantaged areas and an effort has been made to provide an integrated staff in each of the colleges. The counseling load is 50 students per counselor.

The purpose of the program is to provide the opportunity of a college education for individuals under age 30 who did not do well in high school but who show potential for college. The students receive free college expenses, books, and if it is needed, a weekly stipend. Each student's program is individualized and special courses are provided to enable the student to improve his background in reading, mathematics, speech, English as a second language, writing and grammar. Tutoring is arranged in individual or group sessions. The head of this department is responsible for the budget, employment and in-service training of staff, and the overall implementation of the program.

The College Discovery Program is typical of the trend throughout the country. Although it is probably more extensive than others in that it serves

a larger population. It should be emphasized that this approach--focusing on counseling needs of the disadvantaged--must not be permitted to become the sort of separatism deplored in my earlier remarks.

Another trend which is emerging is the changing role of the counselor. Stress is now being placed on the responsibility of serving as a facilitator or enabler. This is mainly accomplished through greater concentration on the professional aspects of counseling. It involves the use of group techniques as well as the one-to-one relationship and it involves the use of other staff computerized data to relieve the counselor of routine matters. The new role for counselors presents the opportunity for the counselor to be more aggressive about bringing about change in the institution.

A corollary of this type of action is the important function of articulation with the high schools. Especially is this significant if constant communication can be kept with the high school counselors who refer large numbers of students to the institution. Pre-college counseling of students thus becomes an important function and cooperative endeavor.

The counselor of the future as a facilitator is expected to become an expert in human relations and human development. Perhaps this need has been recognized by the American Personnel and Guidance Association in establishing a Human Rights Commission in each state.

In this connection and in the attempt to arrange personal examination of attitudes, encounter groups, sensitivity training, T-groups and non-verbal exercises are some of the approaches being used. Counselors are involved in these movements whether or not they take leadership roles.

Many of the encounter groups are arranged as retreats for two or three days in locations away from the campus and some are held monthly for

administrators, staff, students and members of trustee boards. A trained professional leader or facilitator is in charge to provide unstructured interaction to dilute the psychological barriers which impede progress. Even though the goals are fine, problems result if the leadership is not skilled and if there is no provision for that follow-up so essential to sound program planning. Communication and attitudes can remain unchanged or even worsen in some situations. This was true in the case of Wesleyan University which was mentioned earlier.

Rather than encounter groups and the like or in addition, there seems to be developing a movement whereby community junior college student personnel departments offer special courses for one semester or a year taught by counselors. These courses are for freshmen and combine orientation with group techniques. Typical of the titles of some of these courses are: "Self-Concept Courses" and "The Individual in a Changing Society." The students in these courses examine their experiences, goals, beliefs, attitudes, interpersonal relationships and relate these to world or community problems.

Another emerging pattern is that of decentralizing the counseling staff. Counselors are assigned to the academic departments where they work as a team with the teaching faculty and participate as members of that department. Each departmental staff then comprises teachers or specialists, counselors, tutors and technicians. In other situations the colleges provide team teaching with counselors and para-professionals assigned to the teaching team. Such arrangements may serve as an advantage for the counselor but require the student to establish working relations with several counselors.

One of the hopeful developments for counselors is the assignment of para-professionals to assist with non-professional tasks. Suggested activities of

the para-professional are listed in "Support Personnel for the Counselor: Their Technical and Non-Technical Roles and Preparation," in a policy statement adopted November 1966 by the American Personnel and Guidance Association. Among the suggested duties are: describe staff and material available, secure information from interviewee, give information prepared and approved in advance by the counselor, act as recorder for small group sessions, information gathering and processing information, initiate general contact with specific referral agencies, procure and prepare supplies of materials of various sorts, serve as research assistant, supervise and coordinate the clerical or other skilled personnel under the general supervision of the counselor. It is to be understood that the duties assigned to a para-professional are to be determined by the counselor in charge. Use of para-professionals implies that they will be trained in orientation sessions and supervised. Among the difficulties which may result from their use are that some support personnel over-identify with students, some are "do-gooders," some take over in the situation, enmity may result and the counselor or college may treat the non-professional in the same category with maintenance and clerical staff.

Another growing trend in community colleges is the establishment of study skills centers under the supervision of student personnel officers. Some have added technical personnel because of the technological equipment including individual learning machines and audio-visual equipment. In addition there may be para-professionals assigned to tutor or assist students with study skills.

In this summation of the changing role of the counselor, the outstanding challenge of the counselor is as a facilitator of human development. The counselor in his relations with students should understand his role as that of enabling the students to have more satisfying lives, to assure that each is respected and treated with dignity as a human being. One thing is certain, students from low income groups and from minority groups should not have middle class values thrust upon them. Counselors (of all people) should understand

the needs of minority students and should be able to establish rapport, regardless of origin or background of the student. The counselor stands at the forefront of combating racism, intellectual snobbery, traditional isolation, closed minds, little tin gods and whatever in interpersonal relations may be undesirable on the campus. There must be positive feelings of encouragement, respect, courtesy and a conducive atmosphere for learning along with the development of self-esteem. A new look at the college must be taken and measures must be taken to provide the opportunity for human growth and development of all the potential in each student. Otherwise, the various dilemmas currently erupting will continue to grow and destroy. Intercultural understanding is necessary for survival. Social change is inevitable. Colleges must understand that with increasing enrollments and the demand by black and Puerto Rican communities for education, there must be provided the opportunity for healthy human development.

Leaving the subject of counselors but still including them, another trend developing is the involvement of the community. After all, what is a community college? Does it exist as a center for the community with community involvement or is it simply located in a community? Some community colleges have now involved communities in the recruitment of students. This development has brought the need for counselors to work with community groups in explaining their roles. In other instances colleges are running counseling centers for the community. Training programs have been instituted for para-professionals who work part-time and study part-time toward the A.A. degree. The para-professional in these instances are training to become legal aids, social service assistants and teacher aids. As a corollary there have even been developed day care centers for the care of children of these parents and children of regular students. Such a service provides additional experience and observation for students who desire

to become teachers. Some parents of regular students become involved and, therefore, are introduced to the college. From this beginning, parents can learn more about the needs of their children who are in college. Other avenues for bringing parents to the college are invitations or free tickets to cultural events and activities; and of course, the adult or continuing education or basic skills courses are excellent for this purpose. Perhaps in a more structured way seminars or forums can be arranged for parents, as the usual format of a parents' weekend or parents' night is insufficient, in my opinion, to bring about the understanding which is so sorely needed by many parents of the disadvantaged. To some extent this exposure of the college to parents and contact with counselors can lessen the pressures on the student from the home. All in all the actual contact with parents and work with the community will greatly increase the understanding of counselors and teachers of the needs of the disadvantaged.

What of the future? It is recognized that as educators, we face a great dilemma. As educators we expect the educational process to bring about change in the behavior of individuals. Traditionally, we assume that this change should take place in students. Crucially, in a dynamic useful educational community, change must also take place in faculty. We may not remain as, and must exorcise from our community every vestige of a racist society. We must strive to provide educational opportunity for the development of all the human potential it is our privilege to touch, regardless of the race, the color, the creed or the culture of the individuals so entrusted to our professional care. We may do no less, knowing full well that failure may well drive the latent talents of the individuals whom we thus cripple by our failure toward undesirable and mutually destructive paths. We must learn to recognize and most important to

shun such barriers to human understanding as subtle mistreatment, overt hostility, paternalism, misguided manipulation, depersonalization in any form and rejection of minority groups as members of society.

Students, in their confrontations often present nonnegotiable demands. Often they are met by faculty or administrators who return nonnegotiable answers. Why do these situations arise? Where lies the responsibility for firm but understanding leadership? What is wrong with the institutions? How can such situations be prevented? What on earth has happened to the true process of human development in the institution? Just why is there a dilemma?

As I dream of the future, I look forward to the day when educational opportunity is available to all without a need for palliative special programs or demands from minority groups to be included in the opportunity for a college education. With changing admissions patterns and more enlightened administration, this day can be brought into your lifetime and mine. Thus, I can see future student services meeting the needs of all students, no matter how different the individuals may be. Let us return to the age-old principle of "beginning where the learner is."

Junior and community colleges, I believe, have a most exciting and perhaps the most fruitful role to play in the reform of higher education. They are new. They are less bound to stagnant tradition. Their student personnel departments should welcome this--their opportunity to analyze critically their program for human development, to plan wisely and--to get on with the job.

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